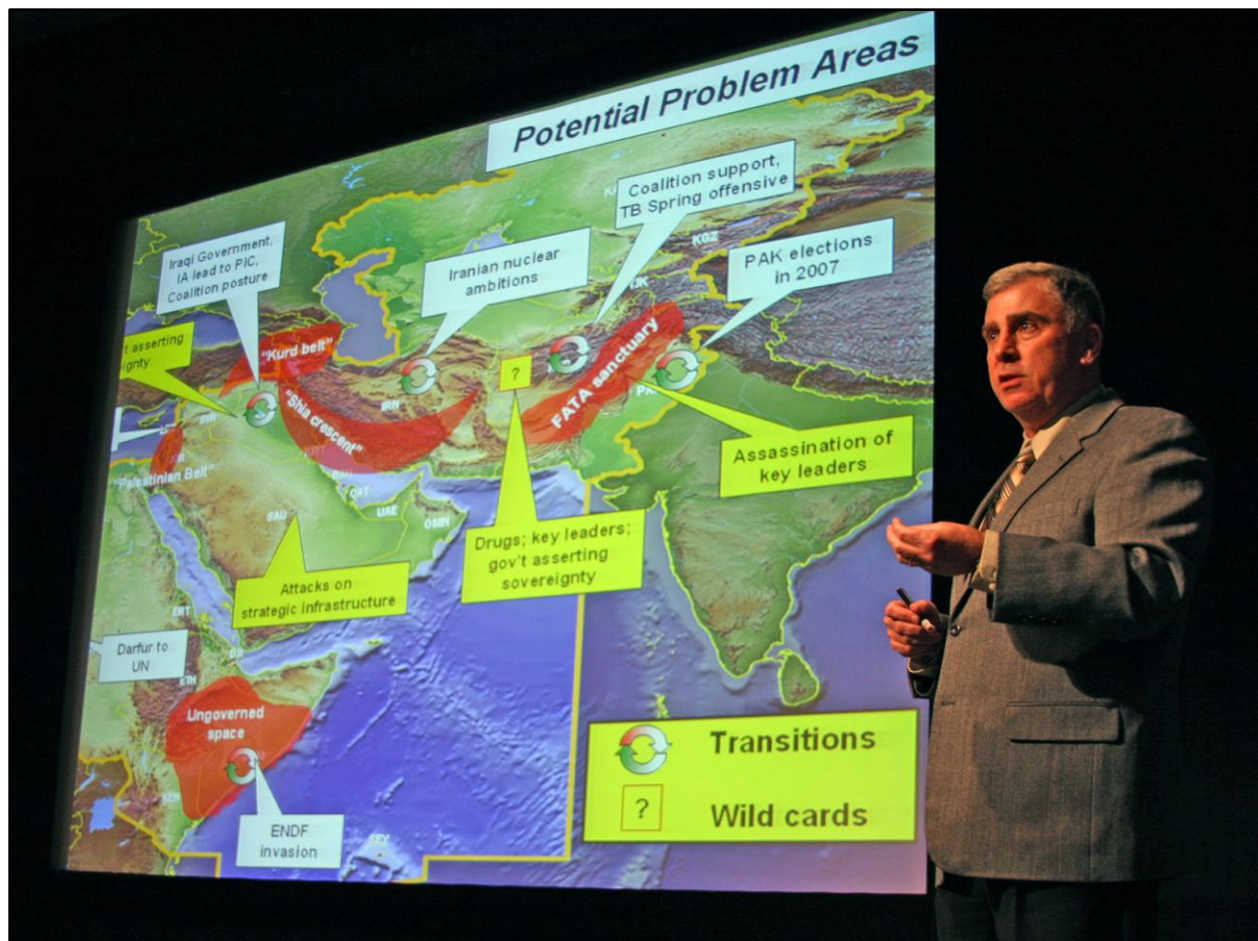




**General John P. Abizaid (left), and Richard Herrmann, Director of the Mershon Center for International Security Studies, talk with faculty members at lunch on February 20, 2008. They discussed the major challenges facing the United States in the Middle East as well as lighter topics such as Army football.**



**General John P. Abizaid (front left), former Commander of U.S. Central Command, meets over lunch with Mershon faculty and graduate students on February 20, 2008, at the Mershon Center for International Security Studies.**



General John P. Abizaid speaks on "Strategic Challenges in the Middle East" to more than 300 Ohio State University students and faculty on February 20, 2008, at the Wexner Center Film/Video Theater. Abizaid outlined what he sees as the four main challenges in the Middle East: the rise of Sunni extremism with al-Qaida, the rise of Shi'a extremism in Iran, the corrosive effects of the Israel-Palestine conflict, and the global reliance on oil.





**(Left to right) Mershon Center Director Richard Herrmann stands with Gen. John P. Abizaid and Mershon Associate Sean Kay on February 20, 2008. Kay is Chair of International Studies at Ohio Wesleyan University, and organized Abizaid's visit to Central Ohio. Abizaid spoke at Ohio Wesleyan that evening.**



**General John P. Abizaid stands with several students from The Ohio State University who attended his talk. The event drew more than 300 faculty and students, a large contingent of which have served or will serve with the Army, Navy, Air Force and Marines. The audience also included a number of students from Somalia.**